MARVEL® COMICS

EXILES™

MARVEL PG 10

A WORLD APART
PART 3 of 3

SIX STRANGERS, EACH AN X-MAN FROM A DIFFERENT REALITY, BROUGHT TOGETHER TO INSURE THAT LIFE AS WE KNOW IT DOESN'T CEASE TO EXIST! BLINK — TELEPORTER; MIMIC — POWERED BY HIS REALITY'S X-MEN; SUNFIRE — MISTRESS OF FLAME; T-BIRD — SUPER-STRENGTH AND SENSES; NOCTURNE — DAUGHTER OF NIGHTCRAWLER; AND MORPH — SHAPE-CHANGING FUNNY MAN. DESTINED TO FIX THE KINKS IN THE CHAINS OF REALITY, STAN LEE PRESENTS THE EXILES IN

A WORLD APART

PART THREE OF THREE

He hungers...

...and he will feed.

He is GALACTUS

The *Planet Destroyer.* The *Devourer of Worlds.* Older than time and living before our galaxy existed.

He seeks out worlds to drain their energy-- their *living essence*-- and satisfy his great appetite.

Today, he has chosen *Earth.* For over a century it has been a successful colony of the *Skrull Empire,* but is now *abandoned.*

The Skrulls chose to *evacuate* their entire populace.

Who could *blame* them? What could they hope to do?

How *does* one stop a *god?*

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You could start with *these people.*

In any realm, they are some of the most *powerful beings* to ever walk the planet.

Their combined force is nearly *beyond comprehension.*

And having spent a good portion of their lives competing against each other in the Skrulls' Gladiatorial *Games,* they are well trained.

Similarly, their years of enslavement have left this strong-willed group much more inclined to *follow* rather than *lead.*

Which leaves these more *experienced* warriors from other realities *in charge.*

Earth's heroes will need the *Exiles'* leadership...

Now, if they could just figure out what to *do,* they'd be in business.

WE COULD GIVE THEM THAT OPENING SPEECH FROM *PATTON.*

WHAT'S *"PATTON"?*

Morph of the Exiles.

The Hulk-- known on this world as The Banner Beast.

Reed Richards.

Peter Parker.

GOSH, REED-- STOP ASKING ME ABOUT SKRULL TECHNOLOGY! YOU'RE THE ONE WHO HIJACKED AND FLEW ONE OF THEIR SHIPS INTO ORBIT, WHICH MAKES YOU THE EXPERT!

BESIDES, YOU'RE THE ONE WITH THE BRAINPAN THAT COULD OUT-COMPUTE AN iMAC!

I ASSUME THAT'S ANOTHER HUMOROUS REFERENCE LOST ON US NOT FAMILIAR WITH YOUR HOME REALITY...

AH, I BET IT'S NOT FUNNY BACK THERE, EITHER.

MORPH, YOU SAID YOUR X-MEN HAD COMMANDEERED A SKRULL VESSEL WHEN YOU FOUGHT THE BROOD ONCE...

YEAH, WE HOT-WIRED ONE OF THEM AND TOOLED AROUND IN IT FOR A WEEK. MAN, REMIND ME NOT TO GET GABBY WITH THE DUDE WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORY.

I'D SAY YOU'VE BEEN COMPLETELY INDISPENSABLE. YOUR INSIGHTS INTO SKRULL TECHNOLOGY HAVE BEEN MOST ADVANTAGEOUS.

WELL, HIS INSIGHTS MAY HAVE RUN OUT, REED.

ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE KEY CODES TO UNLOCK THE SEALED COMPARTMENTS HAD TWELVE DIGIT COMBINATIONS THUS FAR... I'VE BEEN UNABLE TO CRACK THIS ONE.

BRUCE-- OVERRIDE?

COULDN'T AGREE MORE, PARKER.

BLAM!

STOP *DOING* THAT! I TOLD YOU THESE SKRULL MONKEYS ARE MORE PARANOID THAN MULDER ON BAD ACID! THEY BOOBYTRAP ALL *OVER* THE PLACE!

LOOKS OKAY TO ME.

SURE, BECAUSE WE PROBABLY FOUND ANOTHER *SUPPLY ROOM!*

THE WALL-TO-WALL SKRULL EQUIVALENT OF PUMPKIN PIE MIX, CANNED BEETS, AND THAT CRAP THEY LAUGHINGLY CALL *BOOZE!*

BUT WHAT IF WE FOUND...

...THE *ARSENAL.*

NOT AS PARANOID AS "MUDDER ON BAD ACRID," AFTER ALL.

MULDER ON BAD ACID. IF YOU'RE GOING TO MOCK BY THROWING REFERENCES *BACK* AT ME, AT LEAST GET THEM *RIGHT,* PARKER.

YEAH, BUT IS THIS GOING TO DO *ANY GOOD?* SO WE'VE GOT ENOUGH SKRULL ARMAMENTS TO FIGHT A WAR...

...*THEY* DIDN'T THINK THEY STOOD A CHANCE AND *RAN LIKE HELL.* WHY SHOULD *WE* BE ABLE TO PUT UP A *BETTER* FIGHT?

BECAUSE WE KNOW GALACTUS *BETTER* THAN THEY DO. IN MANY OF OUR REALITIES, HE'S BEEN *BEATEN,* MARIKO.

YEAH. MY AVENGERS HANDED HIM HIS *LUNCH* ONCE.

AND MIMIC WAS WITH A CREW THAT NEARLY *KILLED* HIM-- THE FANTASTIC FOUR WAS ON BOARD THAT ONE, RIGHT?

YES. AND DESPITE HIS SHORT-COMINGS IN THIS REALITY, I'M STILL GLAD WE HAVE *REED* HERE.

"YOU AIN'T KIDDING, CAL. HE'S MOVING AT *LIGHT SPEED!*

"IT'S LIKE HE NEVER RODE A BIKE-- BUT YOU SHOW HIM HOW TO PEDAL AND HE'S FIGURED OUT HOW TO DRIVE IT UP A *WALL!*"

MY, MY, MORPH, YOU ALMOST SOUND *HOPEFUL...*

OH NO, I THINK WE'RE ALL GONNA *DIE,* BUT I'M MORE THAN WILLING TO EXPLORE THE *ALTERNATIVES.*

MORPH-- I THINK I FOUND WHAT YOU WERE *LOOKING* FOR...

Thank God...

YEAH, THAT'S IT, BRUCE. PUT IT SOMEPLACE *SAFE.*

WHAT IS IT?

THE *ARROW* TO STRIKE *ACHILLES'S HEEL.*

VERY SMART, MORPH...

...THIS COULD BE WHAT *BRINGS HIM DOWN.*

"TO TELL YOU TO *BE PREPARED FOR ANYTHING* WOULD BE SILLY..."

...BUT *BE PREPARED FOR ANYTHING.* WE HAVE A SERIES OF OPTIONS-- IF ONE DOESN'T WORK, THEN WE HAVE TO PROCEED ONTO *ANOTHER.*

WE PLAY EACH OF THEM OUT. IF ALL FAILS, WELL... *GALACTUS WINS* AND WE ALL GO DOWN WITH THIS VERSION OF EARTH.

REED WILL BE HERE AT COMMAND CENTRAL WHILE WE'RE ON THE FIELD---

I THINK *NOCTURNE* SHOULD REMAIN HERE, AS WELL.

SHUT UP, JOHN.

IT'S NOT *SAFE,* YOU AREN'T UP TO IT.

I AM *FINE*-- I AM *MORE* THAN UP TO IT.

BESIDES, I'M THE *BEST PILOT*-- I'M NEEDED TO FLY THE SKRULL SHIP.

ARE YOU *INJURED?* JOHN'S RIGHT-- IF YOU'RE NOT AT 100% WE NEED TO KNOW.

CAL-- *QUIET.* TJ... WHAT IS IT?

SHE'S PREGNANT.

HOW FAR ALONG ARE YOU?

A LITTLE OVER A *MONTH.* I WASN'T SURE AT FIRST BECAUSE OF ALL THE FIGHTING IN THE GAMES... BUT THEN, WELL, I JUST KNEW... ABOUT A MONTH.

WHO'S THE FATHER?

I AM.

THAT ANSWERS THE QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER *EVERYTHING WORKS* ON THE BIG GUY.

ONE MORE WORD AND I'LL *KILL* YOU.

AND YOU'RE OKAY?

YEAH. PRETTY MUCH. I KNOW I CAN HELP WITH GALACTUS.

IT'S NOT SAFE FOR HER. I *WON'T* *ALLOW* IT.

JOHN. WE *NEED* HER.

AND TO BE BRUTALLY FRANK-- SHE'S NOT MUCH SAFER *HERE* THAN SHE'LL BE IN THE *AIR.*

IF WE FAIL-- WE *ALL* DIE.

I'LL BE CAREFUL, JOHN. I *PROMISE.*

YOU'RE *NEVER* CAREFUL, TALIA.

WELL... THERE'S A *FIRST TIME* FOR EVERY-THING, *RIGHT?*

Hey... what's wrong, Mariko?

IT'S JUST... IT ISN'T...

...it's so unfair...

"...WHEN THIS HAPPENS... IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE A *HAPPY* MOMENT."

"EVERYONE STAND READY.

"PHASE ONE INITIATED--"

--NOW!

There was hope that this would *end* it.

To everyone's best estimation these missiles would put most *nuclear bombs* to *shame.*

It was a *small hope.*

WELL, *THAT* WENT WORSE THAN ANY OF US EXPECTED.

I'M LEAVING AIRSPACE-- I'VE TRIANGULATED THE COORDINATES, MORPH.

IT'S *YOUR TURN,* NOW.

PHASE TWO!

RIGHT! PHASE TWO!

YOU'RE *SURE* YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING, RIGHT?

WHAT'S TO *KNOW?* I'M *ONLY* WORKING WITH TECHNOLOGY OF AN *ALIEN SPECIES* THAT I HAVE *LIMITED KNOWLEDGE* OF. OH, AND I HAVEN'T USED IT BEFORE AND HAD NO TIME TO *PRACTICE.*

I'M *PSYCHED!*

HERE WE GO!

BREEEEEEEN

TZOOOT!

BAAADOOOOM!

NICE SHOOTIN', TEX.

WHY, THANK YOU KINDLY, MA'AM.

HOW MUCH *DAMAGE* DID WE DO?

GIMME A SEC, THE SMOKE'S STILL CLEARING... I'M PRETTY SURE WE...

AW, *DAMN* IT...

"...IT DIDN'T EVEN *PHASE* HIM. I THINK WE HAVE A *SERIOUS* PROBLEM.

"IN MY REALITY AND SOME OTHERS, WE WERE ABLE TO TAKE DOWN GALACTUS BECAUSE HE CAME TO EARTH DURING A *WEAK MOMENT.*

"HE WAS DRAINED, STARVED, AND *VULNERABLE.*

"I DON'T THINK THAT'S WHAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT *HERE.* HE'S ALMOST AT *FULL POWER.* WE--"

CAP!

GET YOUR PEOPLE *OUT OF THERE!*

CAL, WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S *WRONG?!*

CAP FOUND A *HOLE* BELOW THE *FORCE FIELD...*

"...AND HE'S ATTACKING GALACTUS!"

HIT 'EM HARD, PEOPLE -- WE ONLY GET ONE CHANCE.

This group shouldn't even be able to get Galactus's attention.

Despite their impatience and misplaced bravery-- they shouldn't be in any danger.

Unfortunately, a few of them fire a certain type of Skrull disrupter beam that will damage Galactus's massive device

It gets his attention.

It tries his patience

And they pay the price.

Oh, my God, Reed, he just-- they're all--

THERE'S NO TIME, PETER!

WILSON! THE FORCE FIELD DOESN'T GO BELOW THE SURFACE! TELL HARVEY TO BLOW IT NOW! NOW!

GOT YOU, REED!

HARVEY, YOU *HEARD* THE MAN! CLEAR OUT YOUR PEOPLE AND *BRING THE HOUSE DOWN!*

On our world, he is the *Mole Man.*

Here, he is simply known as *Harvey.*

FLEE, BROTHERS!! *FLEE!*

IF WE UNDER-DWELLERS ARE TO *SURVIVE* THIS THREAT WE MUST MAKE A *SACRIFICE!*

It took some of Harvey's largest surface creatures the better part of *four hours* to drag that bomb under the surface

OUR HOME!

BEEP!

CRA-KOOOOM!!

It seems it was *worth* the Mole Men's efforts.

BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!

THOOOOOOOM!

WAIT FOR IT...

NOW! THE SHIELD IS DOWN!

AAAAAAH!!

There aren't many *rules* to defeating Gods

But it's safe to assume they're similar to what they say about fighting *any* opponent who has an advantage over you

Once he's down--

--*keep* him down.

AND WHERE DO YOU THINK *YOU'RE* GOIN', YOU WORLD-EATIN' SACK OF @#$%&?!

DOGPILE ON THE DEMI-GOD! DOGPILE ON THE DEMI-GOD!

JOHNNY! ORORO! GO FOR HIS *HEAD!*

WITH *PLEASURE!*

It is *rare* that Galactus has been brought into battle.

CRACK!

It was one of many reasons why he began acquiring *Heralds.*

It freed him from *distractions.*

And although it's beneath him it is not *outside* of his abilities

As every super being currently in contact with him can *attest* to

QUICKLY, PEOPLE - DON'T LET HIM GET A *SECOND SHOT!*

TWAT!

TZZ-ZACK!

HOOOARC!

"MORPH-- FIRE *NOW!*"

BA-DAM!

TZOOT!

BEEE

"THIS IS MORPH ONE — *MORPH ONE!*

"WE HAVE A *DIRECT HIT* ON THE BIG PURPLE GALACTIC CHEESE BALL!

"REQUESTING *MR. GREEN JEANS* TO DELIVER THE *COUP DE GRACE!*"

IT'S *DONE.*

The Banner Beast holds an *antimatter bomb.*

Morph was familiar with it from his days with the *X-Men.* The X-Men had acquired the Skrull device while fighting the *Brood.*

They exploded it on the Brood homeworld and averted an invasion of Earth

It's a small yet *powerful* explosive

Highly effective against a creature composed of *pure energy.*

If they get the chance to *use* it that is.

Thunderbird sees it happen. Thing, Colossus and the Abomination were all blown *too far* from Galactus to get at him in time

And he knows in an instant that it's all up to *him.*

He is also certain how it will *end.*

He was *John Proudstar.* An *Apache.* He served as a *soldier* in the United States Army before becoming an *X-Man.*

The monster *Apocalypse* saw the rage in him as an asset

He made him into one of his *Four Horsemen.*

He made John Proudstar into *War.*

John has been haunted by so many *ghosts.*

His *father.*

His brother *James.*

His *race.*

He thinks of them now as he allows his humanity to *slip away.*

And when he thinks of what his life has always been about-- he *hits upon it.*

Sacrifice.

And he fee s *fate's foot* on his back.

Galactus's armor is more *function* than *form*. It contains a *maelstrom* of energy-- a veritable *storm* rages inside it.

It's as if Thunderbird just punched a *hole* into the center of a *star*.

AAAARGH!

It matters *little*

He has a *job* to do

Even if it is his *last*.

Talia.

Like dropping a match down an oil well, the antimatter bomb sets off a *chain reaction.*

Engulfing the *power* that resides and *burns* within the imposing mammoth.

HWAA-TOOOOM!

For a creature that lives in a constant state of unendurable pain from *hunger*-- he finds a *new level* of agony

"There are *other worlds* than this one " he thinks.

".. worlds that are *less* trouble "

And for generations to come, when the people of this Earth talk of the day of their *liberation...*

.. when the green skinned oppressors ran in *fear* from a *space monster...*

...they will also tell of a sight that few realities have *ever known...*

...the visage of the mighty Galactus *fleeing* from a fight.

And they will talk of the great *Thunderbird* who delivered them to freedom.

For the moment, though, his friends aren't quite willing to speak of him in *memoriam.*

They haven't *lost* him yet.

And *one* among them is finding it more than she can *beat.*

IT'S BAD, TJ. IT'S *VERY* BAD.

THE BURNS AREN'T REALLY THE *WORST* OF IT... JOHN'S *RECUPERATIVE ABILITIES* ARE REMARKABLE. WE CAN ALREADY SEE SIGNS OF *HEALING.*

SO, HE'S GOING TO BE *OKAY*... RIGHT?

MARIKO... *TELL ME* HE'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT...

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT WE'RE WITHOUT THE BEST AVAILABLE EQUIPMENT-- THIS STUFF WAS MADE FOR *SKRULLS,* AFTER ALL-- WE WERE STILL ABLE TO GET BASIC READINGS.

CARDIOVASCULAR, RESPIRATORY... BRAIN WAVES...

BRAIN WAVES?

BRAIN WAVES...

...WE'RE NOT PICKING ANY UP, TJ.

AT BEST, HE'S IN A DEEP *COMA*... AT WORST...

...HE MAY BE *BRAIN DEAD.*

WELL... I GUESS WE *WAIT,* THEN. EVEN *REGULAR FOLKS* COME OUT OF COMAS...

...LIKE YOU SAID, JOHN HEALS *REAL WELL*... HE COULD COME OUT OF THIS...

...ANYHOW, WE CAN'T MOVE AHEAD TO THE NEXT REALITY WITHOUT JOHN, SO I GUESS WE'RE *STUCK HERE* UNTIL HE RECOVERS.

TJ... I WISH THERE... I WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO *TELL* YOU THIS...

NO!

YOU'RE *NOT* TELLING ME THAT STUPID THING SAYS WE'RE *LEAVING* HIM HERE!

WE LEAV JOHN STRA

N'T THOU AN'T! H HIM I O! YOU GO!

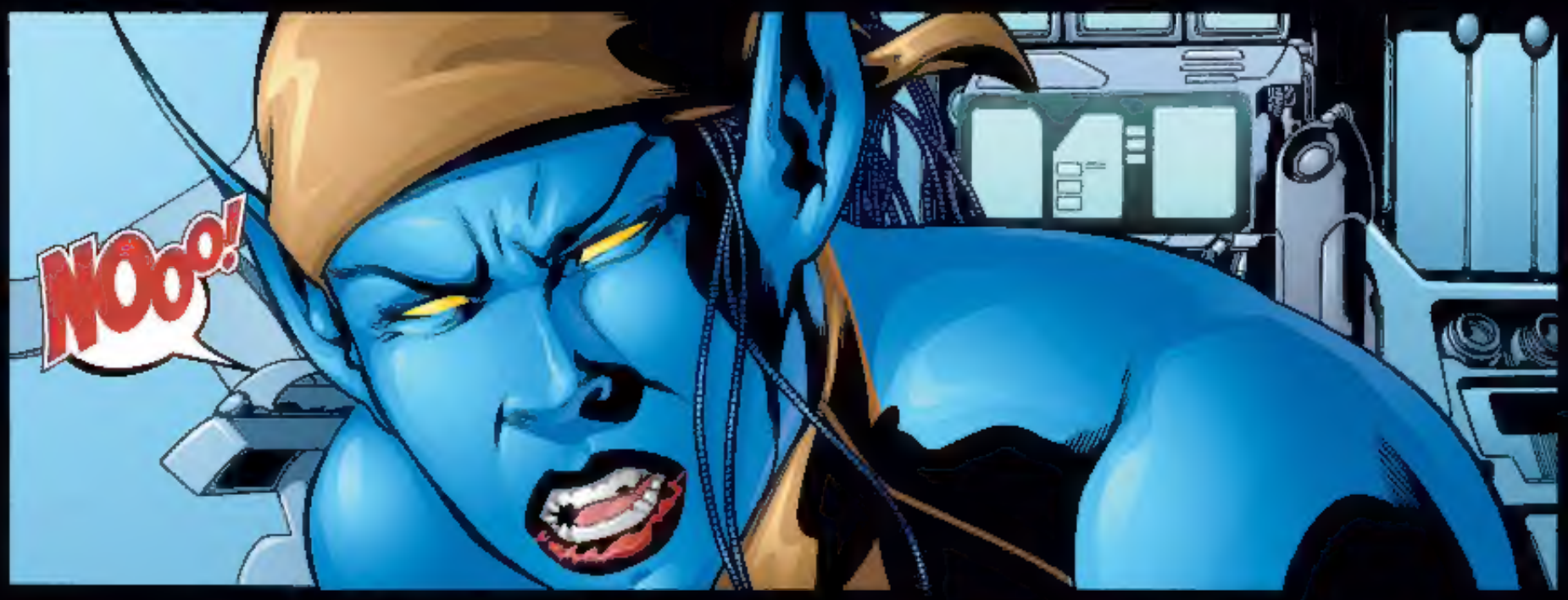
TJ, YOU *KNOW* IT DOESN'T WORK THAT WAY--

BLEEEEENK?

Uh... HI. I'M *SASQUATCH.* THE *TIMEBROKER* SENT ME. I'VE ALSO BECOME *"UNHINGED FROM TIME."*

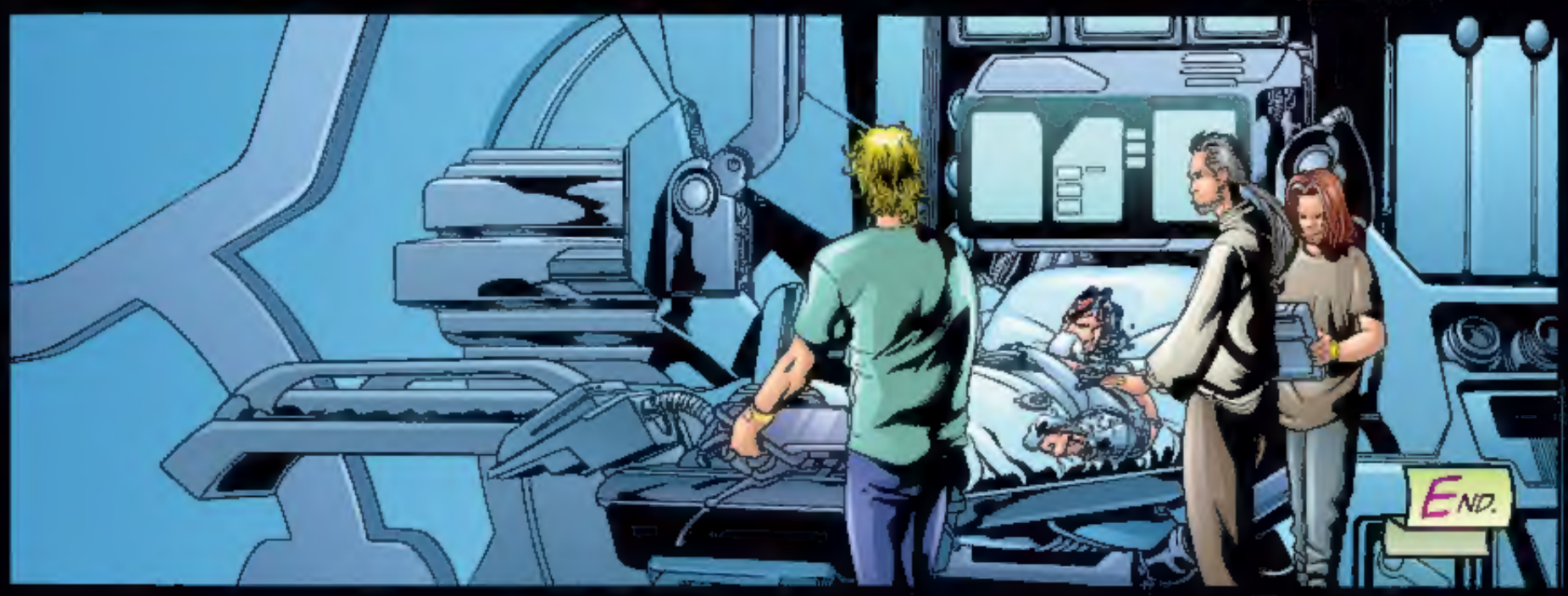
I'M YOUR NEW TEAM MEMBER.

HE ALSO SAID THAT WE WERE READY TO *MOVE ON.*


NOoo!

NO-NO-NO-NO-NO-NO-!
PLEASE! NO!

JOOOOHNNNN--
BLEEEEENK!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